

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
ACDA-07 NEA-10 OES-07 IO-13 EA-07 TRSE-00 ERDA-05
NRC-05 DHA-02 AF-10 ARA-10 SAB-02 NASA-01 /132 W
-----042673 152003Z /61

R 151721Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1004

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 11807

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, UR, US

SUBJECT: BAD WEEK FOR U.S. IN SOVIET MEDIA

REF: MOSCOW 11725

SUMMARY: SOVIET MEDIA TREATMENT OF U.S. DURING WEEK OF AUGUST 8-15 WAS PARTICULARLY HARSH, REFLECTING, NO DOUBT, THE GENERAL MALAISE IN THE RELATIONSHIP, BUT ALSO REFLECTING SPECIFIC SOVIET CONCERNS SUCH AS THE NEUTRON BOMB AND U.S. ME POLICY, WHICH WOULD HAVE PROVOKED SOME SOVIET REACTION REGARDLESS OF THE STATE OF THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP. END SUMMARY.

1. ANTI-U.S. CAMPAIGN IN SOVIET PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA REACHED CLIMAX OF SORTS OVER WEEKEND AUGUST 13-14. MAJOR COMPONENT WAS "THREAT" PRESENTED BY U.S. DEVELOPMENT OF NEUTRON BOMB. CRITICISM FOR MOST PART WAS RELATED TO WORLD PEACE COUNCIL (WPC) WEEK OF INTERNATIONAL PROTEST AND WITH JAPANESE COMMEMORATION OF WWII NUCLEAR BOMBINGS. SOVIET MEDIA GAVE FULL COVERAGE TO PROTESTS AROUND THE WORLD AND IN SOVIET UNION AND SPECIFICALLY CRITI-
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CIZED PRESIDENT'S AUG 9 SIGNING OF BILL AUTHORIZING INITIAL WORK ON WEAPON (ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT WAS NOT CRITICIZED PERSONALLY). ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO "INCONSISTENCY" OF ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY WITH ITS STATED INTEREST IN DISARMAMENT AND DETENTE. INDICATIVE WAS PORTION OF YULIY YAKHONTOV'S "INTERNATIONAL WEEK" COLUMN IN AUG. 14 PRAVDA WHICH CHARGED THAT

WHITE HOUSE WAS NOT LISTENING TO "VOICE OF REASON AND DEMANDS OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE" AND THAT "GAP BETWEEN WORDS AND DEEDS OF AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION WAS GROWING EVER WIDER."

2. OTHER MAJOR THEME OF U.S. COVERAGE OVER THIS PERIOD WAS SECRETARY'S TRIP TO ME. VISIT WAS PORTRAYED AS A FAILURE FROM START TO FINISH, AND ATTEMPT WAS MADE BY TENDENTIOUS MEDIA REPORTING TO SCOFF AT U.S. ABILITY TO ACT AS HONEST BROKER GIVEN ALLEGED U.S.- ISRAELI IDENTITY OF VIEWS - PARTICULARLY ON PLO REPRESENTATION QUESTION. K. GEYVANDOV IN AUG. 14 PRAVDA WENT FURTHER THAN USUAL IN SAYING THAT MANY OBSERVERS QUESTION "SINCERITY OF INTENTIONS OF U.S. RULING CIRCLES" IN OBTAINING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN M.E. IN AUG 13 IZVESTIYA, SENIOR POLITICAL COLUMNIST (AND NOTED U.S.-BAITER) VLADIMIR KUDRYAVTSEV IMPLIED THAT STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF SECRETARY'S VISIT WERE SET DURING VISIT OF ISRAELI PM BEGIN TO WASHINGTON. FOR KUDRYAVTSEV, BOTH "WORKING GROUPS" IDEA AND U.S. POLICY MOVES VIS-A-VIS PLO ACCEPTANCE OF U.N. RESOLUTION 242 WERE PARTS OF ELABORATE PLOY TO HIDE U.S. PRO-ISRAELI POSITION AND WEAKEN "ARAB VIGILANCE."

3. COVERAGE OF U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY REMAINED NEGATIVE, BUT VOLUME OF COVERAGE WAS NOT OUT OF LINE
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WITH THAT OF PREVIOUS WEEKS. MEDIA FOCUSED ON "HYPOCRISY" OF U.S. CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABROAD GIVEN ITS OWN INTERNAL AND FOREIGN POLICY SHORTCOMINGS IN THIS REGARD. FIRST PORTION OF YAKHONTOV'S AUG. 14 PRAVDA "INTERNATIONAL WEEK" COLUMN WAS DEVOTED TO DANGER OF U.S. ATTEMPT TO SPOIL OCTOBER BELGRADE CSCE MEETING BY ATTEMPTING TO BRING SOVIET UNION TO ACCOUNT FOR ITS LACK OF ADHERENCE TO HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

4. OTHER SUBJECTS IN U.S. COVERAGE DURING PAST WEEK INCLUDE ALLEGED U.S. SUPPORT OF S. AFRICAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM (REFTEL), AND COMPLETION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON PANAMA CANAL TREATY. LATTER EVENT RECEIVED VAGUE APPROVAL (I.E., U.S. RECOGNITION OF PANAMANIAN SOVEREIGNTY WAS SUCCESS OF "STRUGGLE OF PANAMANIAN PEOPLE AND SOLIDARITY OF OTHER PEOPLES" - AUG 12 PRAVDA), BUT EMPHASIS WAS ON LINGERING U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN ZONE AND U.S. "RIGHT" TO INTERFERE IN PANAMA IN FUTURE. SEVERAL COMMENTARIES INDICATED U.S. MILITARY BASE IN CANAL ZONE WAS IMPORTANT TO U.S. AS MEANS OF SUPPRESSING PROGRESSIVE FORCES IN LATIN

AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: WHILE THE CRESCENDO OF MEDIA CRITICISM OF THE U.S. DURING THE PAST WEEK HAD ITS BASIS IN THE GENERALLY LOW STATE OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, THERE WAS ALSO A COINCIDENTAL QUALITY WHICH SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED. THE SOVIETS COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO BE HAPPY OVER U.S. NEUTRON BOMB DEVELOPMENTS REGARDLESS OF WHEN THE MIGHT HAVE APPEARED. IN A SIMILAR WAY, THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN EQUALLY CRITICAL OF THE SECRETARY'S TRIP TO THE M.E. HAD IT OCCURRED AT SOME OTHER TIME. THERE HAVE BEEN PLENTIFUL SIGNS OF SOVIET IMPATIENCE WITH U.S. M.E. POLICY BEFORE NOW.

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6. FINALLY, MENTION SHOULD BE MADE OF THOSE - ADMITTEDLY FEW - ITEMS OF FAVORABLE U.S. COVERAGE DURING THE WEEK. BOTH PRESS AND TV GAVE FAVORABLE MENTION TO THE SUCCESSFUL TESTING OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE, AND YET ANOTHER AMERICAN MOVIE - GEORGE CUKOR'S "LOVE AMONG THE RUINS" - WAS THE STAR ATTRACTION ON AUG 13 TV. TOON

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Sent Date: 15-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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